
Surviving The Holidays

Food, Family, Mental Health and More!

Ottawa Holistic Wellness



OTTAWA HOLISTIC WELLNESS

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INTRODUCION

For many of us the winter holidays can be a stressful, isolating time of year.

Dark, cold weather...

Cold and flu season...

Family and self expectations that can be impossible to fulfill...

Additional pressure on finances...

Dietary restrictions in group settings...

Purchasing the perfect gift...

Any of these circumstances alone can be enough to make one wish they could just hibernate through this time of year.

We explore different methods of bring joy back to your holiday season!



CHAPTER 1

A HERBAL TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS!

On the first day of Christmas, my herbalist gave to me a leaf of sage.
To mix in the turkey stuffing and counter any lurking poultry germs.



(*Salvia officinalis*)

On the second day of Christmas, my herbalist gave to me two sprigs of thyme.
To kill any germs the sage may have left behind.



(*Thymus vulgaris*)

On the third day of Christmas, my herbalist gave to me three green bunches of parsley
To calm my full belly after feasting and freshen my breath for the cheek to cheek kissing.



(*Petroselinum crispum*)

On the fourth day of Christmas, my herbalist gave to me four sprigs of mistletoe.
To keep my blood pressure even while I drive around and around the shopping mall trying to
escape the parking lot.



(*Petroselinum crispum*)

On the fifth day of Christmas, my herbalist gave to me five spruce bows.
To hang on the front door where their anti-septic scent disperses into the long, dark night,
chasing the cold virus from the house.



(Picea spp)

On the sixth day of Christmas, my herbalist gave to me six half teaspoons of cinnamon.
To balance my blood sugars while I nibble on shortbread, raspberry squares and chocolate
with nuts, white chocolate, dark chocolate, chocolate with cherry filling, orange chocolate....



(Cinnamomum zeylanicum)

On the seventh day of Christmas, my herbalist gave to me seven bundles of rosemary.
To help me remember the names of all the people I only see only once a year at my
husband's office Christmas party



(Rosemarius officinalis)

On the eighth day of Christmas, my herbalist gave to me eight pieces of ginger root.
To slice into my tea on the morning after, settling my sea sick stomach and easing the
unrelenting throb in my head.



(Zingiber officinale)

On the ninth day of Christmas, my herbalist gave to me nine clove buds.
To chew on when the runny nose nephews descended with coughs and toys that sang,
drummed, wailed and screeched.



(Eugenia caryophyllus)

On the tenth day of Christmas, my herbalist gave to me ten dashes of nutmeg
To calm my nerves after the nephews left.



(*Myristica fragrans*)

On the eleventh day of Christmas, my herbalist gave to me eleven incense sticks of
frankesence.

To scent the room on the holy night while I wrapped gifts in sparkling paper with ribbons and
bows.



(*Boswellia thurifera*)

On the twelfth day of Christmas, my herbalist gave to me twelve drops of myrrh tincture.
To take with a grimace and honey, when I woke with a scratchy throat and a croaking voice.



(*Commiphora molmol*)

And when the presents were all unwrapped and the decorations were rewrapped, the turkey
turned into soup and the tree back in its box, I thanked my herbalist, for I had not even a
sniffle the whole holiday season.

May you have joyous holiday!



About the Author

Abrah Arneson has over 10years experience as a herbalist, and additional training in iridology, Bach Flower essences, and is a Reiki Master. She has taught plant medicine and is author of 2 books. Believing that when we are heard and understood by someone concerned for our wellbeing, the possibility of wellness opens naturally, she listens deeply to her clients' concerns before offering recommendations particular to each individual's needs.

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CHAPTER 2

HOW WILL MY IMMUNE SYSTEM SURVIVE THE HOLIDAYS?: Q&A

Q: I'm travelling a lot over the holidays, what can I do to boost my immune system?

A: A recent study used elderberry to prevent the onset of influenza during air travel. The study looked at 600-900 mg of elderberry extract containing 90-135mg of anthocyanins. Study participants took 2 capsules per day for 10 days before air travel. Two to four days before departure, the dosage was increased to 3 capsules per day, until 4 days after arrival at their destination (1).

Anthocyanins belong to the flavonoid group of phytochemicals; commonly found in teas, wine, fruits, vegetables, nuts, olive oil, and cocoa. They add vibrant colour to these foods, along with a potent antioxidant capacity. Recent research into the human effects of anthocyanins has revealed their ability to strengthen blood vessels, balance the immune system, and combat inflammation (2,3).



Of the 312 participants taking the elderberry extract, 29 developed a cold. The group taking the placebo treatment had greater symptom severity and over twice the duration of illness compared to the elderberry group.

Q: I've heard sugar can compromise my immune system. What lifestyle behaviours can help me with my sweet tooth?

A: Sugar is a contributing factor when dealing with illness over the holidays. Try structuring your meals with a low carbohydrate content, and increase your consumption of proteins from meat and vegetable sources. Some good vegan sources of protein include pumpkin seeds, lentils, black beans, almonds, and tempeh.

Munching on high protein snacks will help to keep your blood sugar stable, increase feelings of fullness, and make it less likely for you to grab those holiday treats.



Q:What about stress and my immune system? My family drives me crazy over the holidays, and I know I'm going to get sick because of the added stress...

A: Stress is an inevitable part of everyone's lives. Unfortunately, you can't pick your family, but you can build your resilience to the added stress that comes with holiday get togethers.

Daily yoga is an excellent way to tone your nervous system and help you keep a cool head when dealing with added stress.

A recent systematic review of 11 studies found that yoga enhanced the production of the body's own antioxidants vitamin C and glutathione in healthy, diabetic, pre-diabetic, hypertensive, and renal disease patients. As a result, there was a significant reduction of oxidative stress after a session of yoga (4).



The great thing about yoga is that you don't need to go to a class to reap the health benefits. A quick search of youtube will get thousands of results for many different types of yoga; one for every person's unique needs.

Have a safe and happy holiday!



About the Author

Dr. Eric Viegas has an undergraduate degree in Health Sciences from The University of Western Ontario and has also completed doctorate equivalency from The Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine (CCNM). He spent his years of study at CCNM devoted to acupuncture, botanical medicine, nutrition, homoeopathy, physical medicine, and counselling.

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CHAPTER 3

NOTICING AND SAVOURING THE POSITIVE TO HELP YOU GET THROUGH WINTER

Most people in Ottawa seem to love summer and enjoy the natural beauty of fall, but there seems to be less enthusiasm for the next season of winter.

As the days get colder and shorter, we start the small talk of wondering how to get through dreaded winter. It can feel like life gets harder as we have more to contend with because of the weather and darker days.



As a human race, we have evolved to focus on the negative in order to problem-solve and survive, but when we can turn our attention to intentionally notice the good everything can seem more bearable. We can enhance the influence of the positive moments in our lives to build up our resilience for when the negative moments come, because life contains both positive and negative moments.

Negative winter moments aren't always so bad, maybe just more inconvenient, but an accumulation of them can really bring us down.

Noticing What Didn't Go Wrong

Take for example, a winter moment like the unexpected blizzard that delays you in traffic and makes you late to meet your friends so that you lose your dinner reservation.

When something like this happens, how many of us will retell the story of how frustrating this was and end up reliving it each time we talk about it?

On the other hand, how many of us will retell or relive the experience of leaving work on time and having nothing keep us from getting where we need to go?

This may seem like a silly question because these kinds of moments don't make very interesting stories to tell to others and that may be why we usually take them for granted. However, these moments are worth retelling ourselves because when we intentionally look for moments like this and then relive internally how nothing went wrong, it is a way to help us see life more positively.

In this example, recognizing the ease with which you were able to leave work and drive to the restaurant to meet your friends will do you good, especially if you can savour the experience as well.

Savouring The Positive

Savouring is an exercise where we focus our attention on fully experiencing through our senses.

It can be something we do in a mindful present moment when we notice the good or a way to bring to mind a positive moment from the past.

Savouring the positive starts with you bringing to mind the specifics of what you are experiencing or that you experienced through your senses.

If you are savouring a positive experience from the past you could ask yourself the following questions:

What did I see that I enjoyed?

What did I hear that was pleasant?

What smells and tastes did I notice and like?

How did my body feel in the moment?

As you answer each of these questions and notice or replay the scene in your mind's eye in as much detail as you can, relish the experience and revel in it.

You can learn more about savouring at <http://www.thepositivepsychologypeople.com/the-art-of-positive-savouring/>.

Anytime And Anywhere

Savouring is something you can do anytime including during annoying winter moments like scraping ice off your car, waiting for a bus, or trudging through the snow.

Reliving the positive moments will also help train your brain to notice the positive in the everyday.

Everyday positive moments such as a stranger's smile, a favourite song on the radio, or a kind word in an email; and before you know it spring will come.

If you find that it is very hard for you to notice anything positive in your life or find that there is nothing you can think of that you have recently enjoyed, you may be suffering from depression. If this is you, please consider setting up a free meet and greet session with me to see if our working together could help.

Wishing you all a happy holiday season with many positive moments to notice and savour!



About the Author

Sofia is a professional member of the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) and in the application process to become a Registered Psychotherapist with the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO). She believes in the transformational impact of psychotherapy and has seen remarkable changes in the lives of her clients.

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CHAPTER 4

SETTING BOUNDARIES TO SURVIVE THE HOLIDAYS

The holiday period can be very challenging for many of us. There are so many expectations and demands from our families, friends and work colleagues, never mind the expectations we set for ourselves..

So how can you come through this holiday period and still be smiling?

One simple solution is to set boundaries and to honour our own needs. This does not mean becoming selfish or self obsessed, it is about balancing what we provide to or for others with nurturing ourselves so we can be there to meet those demands.



Family Expectations

The first thing to remember is that it is okay to say “NO”.

In our society we are usually trained from an early age to please our parents, elders and others. We feel guilty if we do not comply with their wishes.

I have seen this so often in my work; clients run ragged by trying to do everything for everyone else and not looking after themselves.

Maybe you are being pressured about something that simply does not work for you? Perhaps it is a time to visit? Let them know that this is the case and offer an alternative...

When family express dissatisfaction try to take a step back, be firm and calm, and maintain the position that it does not work. Do not get into an argument, simply be the immovable mountain, no matter how hard they push, the answer is still calmly the same.

One 40 year old client said that his mother actually screamed that he did not love her and slammed the telephone down when he said “No” to her that first time.

I encouraged him to be strong, ignore the tantrum and wait for her to call back. This was agonizing for him, he so wanted to please her..

Of course she did call back, he made no mention of the incident and they arranged a suitable solution. This was the start of a whole new, much healthier relationship between them.

Diet

Many of us are now choosing to avoid those foods which do not make us feel so good. This may mean dairy or gluten free, Paleo, auto-immune, vegetarian or vegan or something else. If you know that you will feel sick if you consume a certain food there is no reason to compromise just because you are eating away from home or because it is the holidays. As someone who does not tolerate wheat, corn and most other grains and seeds, beans or milk products I appreciate how challenging this can be..

Most people now appreciate the need for restricted diets and will try to accommodate. The most important thing is to make sure the person who is providing the food knows about any restrictions ahead of time. Have a discussion about the menu and if necessary suggest easy alternatives.

Personally, I find there is nothing quite so disappointing as cooking a meal only to find out that one of the guests cannot eat the dish you have so lovingly created.. Much better to know ahead of time and prepare something everyone can enjoy.

Me Time

Something we often neglect is to take some much needed time to decompress, ground ourselves and to recharge.

Whether you like to read, listen to music, sit in the sun, go for a walk, have a bath or spend time with a close friend, try to schedule this into your day.

Finding the time to nurture yourself will make you so much stronger and more able to enjoy life to the full!

So, all this to say, be good to yourself this holiday season and at all times. Honour your own needs and be sure to create a balance.



About the Author

Sue Taylor is co-founder and Clinic Director at Ottawa HolisticWellness. She works as a Natural Allergist and Energy Healer. Her passion is to work with clients to find the root cause of their health concerns, then offering ways in which to resolve these causes. She will support you through any necessary changes and help you to regain your life!

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CHAPTER 5

5 WAYS YOU CAN STAY HEALTHY AND VIBRANT DESPITE THE OTTAWA WINTER

As a I am writing this blog I am watching the sleet and snow of the first storm of the Ottawa winter.

Winter is often associated with a downturn in our health. All our aches and pains seem to be more evident and of course we are more prone to colds and flus.

But does it have to be to his way?



Here are 5 ways you can stay healthy and vibrant despite the ottawa winter:

1. Sleep Don't Hibernate

When the freezing rain is sticking to our bedroom window the tendency is to turn over and hide back under our duvet.

Research has shown that adequate sleep is essential for our health but too much shut eye is equally as bad. Scientists have established the optimal amount of sleep for an adult is between seven and eight hours. More than that is too much.

2. Stay Active, Stay Healthy

For many of my clients their activity levels tend to drop off during the Ottawa winter months. Exercise as we all know is essential for a healthy body and mind. It can prevent you from adding those winter pounds as well as elevating your mood.

When I ask my clients whether they do any regular exercise they tend to mention going to the gym. Personally I hate gyms. For me they are impersonal and unmotivating places. I like to do my exercise preferably in a group. I find groups more motivating and you get the added health benefit of connecting with other people.

3. Do Not Forget To Drink Water

The human body is composed of seventy percent water. It is vital for optimal functioning of our physiology. So if we fail to drink or consume adequate amounts of water our body and mind are going to slow down. We will get fat and depressed.

For obvious reasons making sure we drink enough water, is tricky during the winter. We also tend to lose just as much water through perspiration during the winter because of our heated environments.

To help my clients remember to drink more water I recommend using a water app on their phone. The app I use called Waterlogged alerts me every hour to drink a glass of water.

4. Manage The Winter Stress

The shorter days and freezing temperatures add to our overall stress burden. Stress is probably the most common root cause of my clients' health concerns.

Just like making sure we drink enough water being extra mindful of managing our stress is important to remaining healthy during the winter months. When your body experiences any type of stress it will release the hormone cortisol into the blood. Long term stress and production of cortisol can have detrimental effects on our health.

Ensuring adequate exercise and sleep have been shown to lower cortisol. If you are open to taking supplements both Vitamin C and Fish oil help to lower cortisol.

5. Be With People

Humans are social animals and being so is vital for a healthy existence. With the advent of social media we have become much more insular and this can be easily amplified during the winter months.

Making time to spend time with friends and family is important. If you don't have many friends or family nearby then try joining a group. There are tons of meetup groups you can try in Ottawa. I suggest having a look on meetup.com.

If following these tips doesn't help you feel great during the winter months then visit your Naturopathic Doctor or Functional Medicine Practitioner for more help!



About the Author

Dominick Hussey, Functional Medicine and Osteopathic Manual Practitioner, combines osteopathy, functional medicine with nutrition and lifestyle counselling in his practice, and strongly believes that healing is a process in which the patient must take an active role.

He has become disillusioned with modern approaches which simply provide a band-aid approach to mask and temporarily relieve symptoms. His passion is in determining the real, underlying cause for those symptoms and in so doing to bring about true, deep, lasting healing.

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CHAPTER 6

SHOVELLING YOUR WAY THROUGH WINTER: TIPS ON HOW TO DO IT RIGHT!



Winter weather has officially arrived! As the snow continues to pile up, shovelling can seem like a full time job. Most of us have shovelled at some point in our Canadian lifetime, but many are unaware of the tiresome affects it can have on our bodies if done incorrectly.

Incorporating physical fitness in your weekly routine will help keep your body strong and able to easily withstand winter tasks such as shovelling.

Did you know that the average shovel weights 6 pounds? That may not seem like a lot, but if loaded with snow and lifted over-and-over, the body is put under a lot of stress.

Before You Start Shovelling:

Dress warmly and in layers

Once your body warms up, you can easily shed a layer.

Hydrate

Even though we don't sweat as easily, we can still get dehydrated in the winter. The cold weather causes a decreased thirst response, so, remember to drink up!

Active Stretching / Warm-Up

It is a good idea too warm up your body before starting. For example, take a 5-minute brisk walk around the block before embarking on your snow mountain.

Don't let the snow pile up

The less snow you have to shovel, the better.

Proper Shovelling Techniques:

Use a lightweight shovel

You want a shovel that you can push. Metal shovels are heavy and snow tends to stick to them.

Push, don't lift!

Push the snow forward and to the sides. Trying to pick up and throw a heavy pile of snow can be dangerous.

Pushing will minimize the amount of bending and twisting your back has to do. If you must pick up the shovel, make sure you are bending your knees to take stress off your joints.

Switch Sides

Switching from left to right will help prevent one sided muscle fatigue.

Take a Break

Regular breaks will prevent your body from getting too tired and prevent next day soreness.

Cool Down

Do a similar cool down as you did warm up. Another short walk around the block is a great idea.

Happy Shovelling!



About the Author

Dr. Stacia Kelly is a chiropractor and acupuncture provider who is also qualified to fit you with custom orthotics. She believes that chiropractic care can support both acute and chronic pain, as well as help to maintain lifelong wellness. Whether it for spinal dysfunction, rehabilitation, nutritional advice, or other life stresses, Dr Kelly will individualize her care based on what suits your chiropractic needs.

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CHAPTER 7

4 Winter Running Tips

Do you like to get out and run all year round?

Here are 4 tips to help you prevent injury and to enjoy yourself!



1. Dealing With Cold Temperatures

Our body's temperature is around 37 degrees, so in winter it has to adapt to the air temperature. In order to keep us warm the heart will pump more, causing the heart and arteries are working hard. This will increase the risk of high blood pressure, especially as we get older.

Tendons and muscles are weaker due to the cold weather so it is important to allow time to warm up properly, making sure that your body is ready before you push yourself.

For this reason, winter is also a season where it's easier to get injuries to muscles and tendons, and to damage joints.

In the cold, you will require more calories during your run which can cause hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar).

And, in addition to all this, bronchial tubes are more sensitive, so beware of asthma!

2. What To Wear?

Dress in layers

Layers of clothing are highly recommended: long sleeve shirt, sweater, gortex jacket if it's raining or windy.

Running tights are available in different thickness, so choose depending on the weather.

It will be hard to keep your extremities warm, that is your hands and feet warm, because they are further from the heart. If your body feels threatened by cold it will shut down circulation to the extremities to maintain heat in your core. So keeping your chest, neck and head warm helps to keep hands and feet warm.

For feet and hands, 2 layers of clothing are recommended.

For hands: silk for the first one, neoprene for the second one. **For feet:** two pairs of polypropylene socks will keep your feet warmer and drier than one heavy pair.

Wear the right fabrics

Polypropylene, capilene (polyester), and some wool/synthetic blends wick moisture away from your body. It helps in keeping you as warm and dry as possible.

Avoid wearing cotton because it doesn't wick moisture and also has very little insulating ability, which will leave you wet, cold and uncomfortable.

Cover your head
There are many skin receptors to the cold in the forehead, ears and neck. A headband is highly recommended with cap on top if it's really cold.

3. Adapt Your Program For The Cold

When it is cold, your warm up should last between 15 and 20 minutes. Start and end slowly. In the extreme cold, avoid any kind of interval training. It will overwork your heart.

As soon as your run is done, get dressed in dry clothes to avoid getting chilled or jump into a warm shower if its available.

4. Stay Hydrated And Fuelled For You Run

As it has been mentioned above, hypoglycaemia is a risk to consider.

Avoid running on an empty stomach; make sure you eat something before you leave.

Cold weather will also promote dehydration. Sweet water is recommended before, during and after your run. Tepid sweet tea is ideal. Beet juice will dilate arteries, increasing circulation for your muscles.

If you want to know more about how to run safely in the cold ask your osteopath today!



About the Author

Justine studied osteopathy in France and worked in a private practice. She has studied many techniques including structural, muscle energy, functional, fascial, craniosacral therapy and Jones counterstrain techniques. Justine's experiences ranges from babies to the elderly, people with disabilities and athletes.

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CHAPTER 8

SUPPLEMENTS TO HELP REDUCE THE CHRISTMAS DINNER BLOAT

Have you ever felt bloated and sleepy after Christmas dinner?

As a young lad after eating my grandmothers Christmas dinner, I would look like I had swallowed a soccer ball and would soon be sound asleep on the sofa.

Dial forward some 45 years, and, after learning I have celiac disease, I can understand why my young body reacted in such a way to a meal full of wheat.

My solution is simple I just avoid wheat and can then sit comfortably on the sofa and watch the Christmas day movie without falling asleep.

Have you felt bloated after Christmas dinners?

Do you want to avoid the same experience this year?

If you do feel bloated, read on to learn more about which supplements I recommend.

Increase your stomach acid production

One of the most common reasons for bloating after eating is due to a lack of acid production in the stomach. Stomach acid helps break down protein-rich foods such as turkey. If you have low stomach acid, then the turkey will not be broken down sufficiently and will cause bloating. Reduced stomach acid related bloating occurs 5-10 minutes after eating.

To help increase stomach acid production, I suggest the following supplements:

Braggs Organic Apple Cider Vinegar

Take one tablespoon in some warm water 5-10 minutes before eating.

St Francis Canadian Bitters

Take one teaspoon 5-10 minutes before eating.

Betaine HCL capsules

Take one capsule during the meal.

Stimulate Digestive Enzymes

Digestive enzymes are mainly produced by the pancreas and by the cells that line your small intestine. These enzymes help to break down your food's macronutrients such as protein into micronutrients such as amino acids. If you have reduced enzymes and foods are left in their macronutrient form this can lead to inflammation and bloating. This inflammation and

resulting bloating can be much worse if you have a sensitivity to a particular food protein such as gluten or casein. Pancreatic deficiency bloating becomes apparent 30 minutes after eating.

To help increase production of pancreatic enzymes, I suggest the following supplements:

St Francis Canadian Bitters

Take one teaspoon 5-10 minutes before eating.

Digestive Enzymes

Take one a few minutes before eating.

Reduce Gas Production from Small Intestinal Bacterial Overgrowth

Small Intestinal Bacterial Overgrowth or SIBO is condition occurs when bacteria that normally live in the large intestine overgrow onto the small intestine. A common symptom of SIBO is bloating that occurs roughly 30 minutes after eating. I find SIBO in the vast majority of my clients with or without digestive symptoms such as bloating.

To help reduce bloating from SIBO, I suggest the following supplement:

Soil-based Probiotic

Take two capsules at supper.

What supplements should I take?

If you are unsure what supplements to take, I suggest the following:

Determine when your bloating starts after eating. If it starts 5-10 minutes after eating, then you probably have inadequate stomach acid. I would then begin with the apple cider vinegar.

If the bloating starts later, then consider starting with the Bitters. If the bloating continues, then try the probiotics.

Disclaimer: *This article is not intended to provide medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.*



About the Author

Dominick Hussey, Functional Medicine and Osteopathic Manual Practitioner, combines osteopathy, functional medicine with nutrition and lifestyle counselling in his practice, and strongly believes that healing is a process in which the patient must take an active role.

He has become disillusioned with modern approaches which simply provide a band-aid approach to mask and temporarily relieve symptoms. His passion is in determining the real, underlying cause for those symptoms and in so doing to bring about true, deep, lasting healing.

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CHAPTER 9

EATING GLUTEN FREE ON A BUDGET



The notion that gluten free is better for our overall health is a new one but most of us have heard about it by now.

Some feel it is a fad dieting idea with not much substance - we have been eating wheat for centuries, why is it all of a sudden so detrimental to our wellbeing?

The short answer is that today's wheat is an entirely different beast than the wheat our ancestors ate, and our bodies are just not able to process what passes for food these days.

Why is gluten so bad?

Gluten is a protein found in many grains such as wheat, rye and barley. It is known to be one of the more difficult proteins to digest. This is compounded by all the chemicals used to grow and harvest our modern-day industrially grown, cash rich and nutrient deficient wheat crops. We have managed to turn the 'Staff of Life' into the 'Stuff of Disease' by ignoring the human body's inability to evolve as quickly as the 'food' we put into them. To learn more about how today's wheat is different from what our grandparents consumed, I suggest watching the documentary called "What's with Wheat" (available on Netflix). Well done and informative, it will motivate you to take that step into the gluten-free world.

Why not gluten free?

A common complaint about going gluten free is budget. Often replacement products such as gluten-free breads, pastas and crackers costs many times more than their gluten-full counterparts.

One solution is to bake your own. You won't save time, but you will save money, have better control of what you are eating and have bragging rights to all your yummy GF creations.

Loading up on legumes like chickpeas, lentils and beans (black, kidney, lima) and grains such as brown rice, buckwheat and quinoa is a healthy alternative to wheat and gluten for your carbohydrate intake. Think stews, soups and stir-fries instead of pastas or sandwiches for your meal plans. Potatoes, especially sweet potatoes and baby potatoes, along with squashes are another carbohydrate choice which make for a wise, inexpensive wheat substitute.

You may wish to make your own gluten free flour blend. It can be stored in an air tight container such as a jar, preferably in the fridge or freezer.

GLUTEN FREE FLOUR BLEND (Courtesy of The Minimalist Baker)

- ❖ 1 1/2 cups (240 g) brown rice flour
- ❖ 1/2 cup (96 g) potato starch
- ❖ 1/4 cup (40 g) white rice flour
- ❖ 1/4 cup (30 g) tapioca flour

Mix and store..

Here are a couple of my favourite recipes to get you started:

1 BOWL VEGAN GLUTEN-FREE CRACKERS

These crackers are delicious! Even tastier than their gluten-full counterparts if you ask me and as the author notes, reminiscent of wheat thins. The addition of rosemary and garlic powder gives them a nice savoury flavour which pairs great with cheeses and legume spreads such as hummus.

Ingredients:

- ❖ 3/4 cup (120 g) Gluten-Free Flour Blend*
- ❖ 2/3 cup (50 g) almond meal* (or sub gluten-free oat flour*)
- ❖ Heaping 1/4 tsp baking powder
- ❖ 2 Tbsp (14 g) flaxseed meal
- ❖ 1 tsp fresh chopped rosemary
- ❖ 1/2 tsp sea salt
- ❖ 1/8 tsp garlic powder (optional)
- ❖ 3.5 Tbsp (52 ml) neutral oil (i.e. grape seed or avocado oil)
- ❖ 3-5 Tbsp (45-75 ml) cold water



Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 325°F and line 1 large or 2 small baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. Add dry ingredients to a food processor or a mixing bowl and process or whisk until thoroughly combine.
3. Then add oil and pulse/use a pastry cutter or fork until crumbly.
4. Add cold water 1 Tbsp at a time, pulsing/stirring until it forms a semi-sticky dough that's mouldable with your hands and not crumbly. It shouldn't need more than 5 Tbsp.
5. Remove from processor or mixing bowl and form into a loose ball with your hands. Transfer to a clean surface lined with wax or parchment paper. Lay another sheet of parchment paper or wax paper on top and use a rolling pin to roll the dough out into a rectangle slightly less than 1/8th inch thick (see photo).
6. Use a knife, a pizza cutter, or a small cookie cutter to cut the dough into squares (or circles). Makes about 60 squares.
7. Transfer the dough (still on the wax paper or parchment) to a baking sheet and pop in the freezer for about 10 minutes to stiffen. This will help them firm up and become easier to transfer to the baking sheet.
8. Once firm, use a spatula to carefully transfer the crackers to the parchment-lined baking sheet(s) in a single layer, making sure they aren't touching to ensure even baking.
9. Bake for 16-22 minutes or until slightly golden brown (be careful not to burn). Remove from oven and let cool.
10. Enjoy immediately. Store leftovers covered at room temp for up to 1 week or in the freezer for 1 month.

For pictures and more information about this cracker recipe visit:

<https://minimalistbaker.com/1-bowl-vegan-gluten-free-crackers/>

THE BEST GRAIN-FREE GLUTEN-FREE SANDWICH BREAD

I like this one as it has lots of butter and eggs and uses nut and seed flours instead of those made with grains. All this means that it packs a powerful punch in terms of protein and healthy fats, keeping you fuller longer, regulating your blood sugars better and providing the building blocks needed for your body.

Ingredients:

- ❖ 3/4 c. coconut flour, sifted
- ❖ 1/4 c. flax meal
- ❖ 2 tbsp arrowroot
- ❖ 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- ❖ 1 tsp gluten-free baking powder
- ❖ 1/2 tsp salt (3/4 if using unsalted ghee)



- ❖ 1 tsp. onion powder
- ❖ 1/8 c. sesame seeds (plus 1 tbsp)
- ❖ 7 eggs, beaten
- ❖ 1/2 c. melted butter (1/2 c. melted coconut oil or if you're just casein-free you can use ghee)
- ❖ 2 tbsp sour cream (or Greek yogurt) (2 tbsp plain coconut yogurt plus 2 tsp melted coconut oil)

Instructions:

- 1.** Preheat oven to 325°F
- 2.** Combine dry ingredients (except the 1 tbsp extra sesame seeds).
- 3.** Combine beaten eggs, and sour cream and beat into dry mixture. Add melted butter.
- 4.** Pour into 9x5 loaf pan, sprinkle with the extra sesame seeds
- 5.** Bake for 40-50 minutes.

For pictures and more information about this bread recipe visit:

<http://bloodsugarbasics.com/the-best-grain-free-gluten-free-sandwich-bread-in-the-history-of-man/>

There are many more easy recipes online so get baking and find out how gluten free can be simple and economical!



About the Author

Emily Dunn studied in Ottawa to become a registered acupuncturist and has additional training in Dr. Tan's Balance Method, Master Tung's Points and facial rejuvenation for cosmetic acupuncture. What inspires Emily as an acupuncturist is the ability to use a millennia old, drug-free method to help people relieve their symptoms and to facilitate natural healing.

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CHAPTER 10

HOW TO PROTECT YOUR ENERGY: CREATING YOUR OWN SHIELD



Do you feel drained after spending time with certain people? Or find being in emotional or highly charged situations overwhelming or distressing?

We are energy beings, and can all pick up on the energy of others. Some of us are more open to this energy than others, but we can all benefit from bringing awareness to this and from developing our very own protective shield.

Absorbing Energy From Other People

This especially happens with family and those we love or care about, and in emotionally charged situations - a common thing in families, especially during then holidays!

We unconsciously open ourselves up, sending out our love and desire to help, and become a sponge soaking up their emotions and physical complaints.

Did you ever develop a stiff neck or digestive discomfort out of nowhere, or suddenly feel sad or irritated? Next time look at the people around you and see if, perhaps, it is someone else who has the issue, and you are just picking up on it.

This uses to happen to me a lot. I would be sitting in a bus or in a restaurant, or at a family gathering and would suddenly get a pain, or a crampy stomach, or feel really down or angry..

Developing Your Own Protective Shield

The first step to protecting yourself is to be aware that not everything you feel is your own and to have the intention of not taking energetic garbage from others.

Next we create a “shield”. This is yours, and can be in any form that feels right. It may be a veil, a blanket, a set of big feathery wings, a shimmering forcefield or something completely unique to you.

You may find an item to carry, whether a necklace, a crystal or other small object that acts like a talisman for you, symbolising your shield.

Remember that this shield is intuitive. It does not act like an impermeable barrier, but lets through just what is needed and allows you to ground. It also protects your energy by creating a boundary to keep it contained.

Using Your Shield

Initially this shield requires attention to keep it in place, however, it will become more automatic over time.

Before getting up in the morning take a moment to imagine drawing the shield over / around you. Then during the day, anytime that it comes to mind, reinforce the intention that it is there. Similarly, before going into a meeting, a busy place, a bus / airplane or even getting together with a close friend or family member take a moment to bring up that shield.

If you find at any time that you are being affected by other people disengage and reinforce the shield. This could take the form of simply looking down to break eye contact, maybe ‘tie your shoe’ or scratch your ankle, or drop something so you can bend down. Alternatively make an excuse to leave the room briefly, perhaps go to the washroom.

Take that break to breathe, calm yourself and replace your shield.

Going Forward

Do not be too hard on yourself if your shield keeps slipping at first, it takes practice and repeated attention, especially initially, to get it to stay in place and to become more automatic.

If you would like help with this or any other aspect of being affected by the energy and emotions of others I recommend seeking the advice of someone with training in Reiki, Energy Healing or Shamanism.

Resource:

Psychology today, “A survival guide for empaths”, by Judith Orloff, MD



About the Author

Sue Taylor is co-founder and Clinic Director at Ottawa HolisticWellness. She works as a Natural Allergist and Energy Healer. Her passion is to work with clients to find the root cause of their health concerns, then offering ways in which to resolve these causes. She will support you through any necessary changes and help you to regain your life!

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CHAPTER 10

GLUTEN AND DAIRY FREE HOLIDAY RECIPES

It seems that many of our friends and family are now choosing to be gluten and / or dairy free.

This can be tricky during the holidays so I have put together some alternative ingredients and some recipe suggestions. Most of these are Paleo, so actually grain, dairy, bean and sugar free.

Of course, should you wish to cheat with the gluten it is possible to take specific enzymes, available from most health food stores, to reduce the reactions you may have.

Alternative ingredients:

There are now many alternatives for the standard ingredients used in recipes. It is often possible to simply switch them over. It is good to try different products to work out what you like.

Many of these products are available in grocery stores such as Loblaw's and Independent where they may be found in the natural / organic section, and in health food stores.

Milk Products:

Soy is now considered to not be a great food by many - it contains estrogen which has been linked to various health concerns including adversely affecting your thyroid.

<https://www.webmd.com/food-recipes/features/how-good-is-soy#1>

<https://draxe.com/is-soy-bad-for-you/>

So what do you choose instead?

Milk: a wide variety of cartons - coconut, almond, hemp, rice etc

Butter and oil: coconut (great for frying and baking), olive, avocado, flax, hemp, sesame etc

Cheese: Deiya cheese is tapioca based, cashew or rice based cheeses

Cream in cooking: Coconut milk (organic tins are best), or cauliflower puree

Yoghurt: coconut yoghurt

Ice cream: coconut and rice ice cream

Wheat, gluten and corn:

Many gluten free options contain corn instead. Most corn is now GMO, in addition to which many of us do not digest corn well. You may feel better using other alternatives to corn.

Flours: Oat, buckwheat, arrowroot, sorghum, potato, rice, coconut, almond etc

I hope you enjoy the following recipe ideas:

1. Stuffing - Savoury sage and sweet apple
2. "Corn bread" (no grains) for the stuffing
3. Turkey gravy
4. Easy gravy
5. Raw quick Christmas Pudding
6. Steamed Christmas Pudding
7. Pumpkin Pie - a nice option for Boxing Day or New year!

SAVOURY SAGE & SWEET APPLE STUFFING

<https://www.mommypotamus.com/homestyle-stuffing-gaps-paleo-primal/>

Ingredients:

- ❖ 3 ½ cups onion, diced
- ❖ 2 ½ cups celery, diced
- ❖ 1 cup apple, cored and diced
- ❖ ¼ cup dates, chopped into small pieces (raisins or dried cranberries would also be good)
- ❖ 2 cups almond flour
- ❖ 2 teaspoons sage
- ❖ 2 teaspoons thyme
- ❖ ¼ teaspoon marjoram
- ❖ ¼ teaspoon rosemary
- ❖ ¼ teaspoon pepper
- ❖ ½ teaspoon salt
- ❖ 2 tablespoons butter, ghee or coconut oil
- ❖ 3 eggs, whisked



Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F
2. Grease a medium-sized baking dish (If you're using a cast iron skillet or pan that can go from stovetop to oven, skip this step)
3. Add 2 tablespoons butter/ghee/coconut oil to a saucepan and warm over low/med heat.

4. Add onion, celery, apple and herbs and sauté over medium heat for 5 minutes. Remove from heat.
5. In a large bowl, add almond flour and dates and mix. (Note: If you have a cast iron or pan that can go from stovetop to oven, you can just mix everything in the pan.)
6. Add the lightly beaten eggs to the bowl and mix well.
7. Add mixture to baking dish if using, or simply place the pan in the oven.
8. Bake at 350F for 45 minutes for 1 hour

GRAIN FREE "CORN BREAD"

<https://deliciouslyorganic.net/cornbread-sausage-stuffing-grain-free-gaps-paleo/>

Ingredients:

- ❖ 2 cups almond flour
- ❖ 3 tablespoons coconut flour
- ❖ 3 teaspoons baking powder or baking soda (make sure it's grain-free)
- ❖ 1 teaspoon sea salt
- ❖ 2 teaspoons coconut sugar (or 1 teaspoon honey)
- ❖ 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- ❖ 8 tablespoons unsalted butter, ghee or coconut oil melted and cooled slightly
- ❖ 1 cup plain, whole coconut yogurt
- ❖ 2 medium jalapeños, minced (optional)
- ❖ Shredded cheese (optional), Deiya cheese will work
- ❖ 1/2 yellow onion, minced



Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 425°F and adjust rack to middle position of oven. Butter an 8 x 8-inch baking dish.
2. Whisk almond flour, coconut flour, baking powder, sea salt, baking soda and coconut sugar together in a large mixing bowl.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk together the eggs, butter or coconut oil, and coconut yoghurt.
4. Pour this mixture, jalapeños (if using) and onions into flour mixture and gently fold all ingredients together.
5. Pour half of the cornbread batter into the baking dish and spread out evenly.
6. Sprinkle the shredded cheese on top if using, and then pour the remaining batter on top.
7. Bake for 30-35 minutes, or until the top is golden brown.

TURKEY GRAVY

<https://thedomesticman.com/2011/12/01/turkey-gravy/>

Ingredients:

- ❖ 1 set of turkey parts (neck, heart, liver, giblets)
- ❖ 1 tbsp butter or coconut oil (for browning)
- ❖ 1/2 onion, chopped
- ❖ 1 bay leaf
- ❖ 2-5 cups chicken or turkey broth (see note below)
- ❖ turkey pan drippings
- ❖ turkey trimmings from carving
- ❖ 1/2 cup whole cream or coconut cream
- ❖ salt and pepper to taste
- ❖ 3 tbsp potato or arrowroot starch

Instructions:

1. The amount of broth you use for this recipe depends on how much gravy you want, and whether or not you're going to have drippings left over after cooking your bird. For example, if you're going to roast your turkey in the oven then you'll likely have about a cup drippings to use; if you smoke it on the grill you may not have any. I'd say 1/2 a cup of broth per person is a pretty accurate measure of how much you'll need.

2. Melt the butter / coconut oil in a pot on medium heat. Add the turkey parts and brown them for a few minutes. Next, add the chopped onion and simmer until the onions soften, about five more minutes. Add the broth and bay leaf, and bring it to a gentle boil; reduce the heat to low and let it simmer while the turkey cooks (at least two hours).

3. After the turkey is done and resting, add your pan drippings (if you have any) to the broth. Pour everything into a fat separator lined with cheesecloth, and press the parts/onion down to squeeze all the juice out that you can. Return the broth to the pot (minus the fat). If you like, you can chop up the turkey parts and add them to the broth. Bring the broth back to a gentle simmer as you carve the turkey.

4. Once your turkey is sufficiently dissected, chop up any leftover turkey trimmings and add them to the broth, as well as the cream. Allow it to simmer for about five minutes, stirring often. Add salt and pepper to taste. Mix the potato / arrowroot starch with a little water, and then stir in about half of it to the gravy. Let it simmer for a few more minutes, while stirring, as it thickens – if it isn't thick enough, add the other half of the starch and let it simmer again. That's it – serve immediately.

EASY GRAVY

<https://cookeatpaleo.com/easy-paleo-gravy/>

Ingredients:

- ❖ 2 tablespoons turkey fat from pan drippings, ghee or coconut oil
- ❖ 1/2 cup chopped onions
- ❖ 2 cups chopped cauliflower
- ❖ pan drippings
- ❖ 1-2 cups chicken or turkey stock
- ❖ several sprigs fresh thyme or other herbs
- ❖ sea salt and fresh ground pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Heat fat over medium heat in sauce pan. Add onions and cook until onions start to brown.
2. Stir in cauliflower and thyme sprigs.
3. Measure pan drippings and add enough stock to equal 2 cups of liquid. Add pan drippings/stock mixture to pan with vegetables. Let simmer until cauliflower is fork tender, (about 10 minutes).
4. Remove herb stems.
5. Place in a blender on high until smooth and creamy.
6. Return gravy to pan to reheat. Add more stock to thin to desired consistency, if needed.
7. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
8. Serve and enjoy!

RAW QUICK CHRISTMAS PUDDING

<https://www.goodfood.com.au/archived/pete-evanss-healthy-christmas-pudding-20131209-2z0kd>

Made into individual puddings. Ideal for family times. (Makes 8)

Ingredients:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ❖ 60g dried figs | ❖ 170ml almond meal / flour |
| ❖ 2 tbsp orange zest | ❖ 1 tsp vanilla extract |
| ❖ 50g flaxseed meal | ❖ ¼ tsp allspice |
| ❖ 2 tbsp dried sour cherries | ❖ 1 tsp ground cinnamon |
| ❖ 1 tsp fresh ginger, grated | ❖ ¼ tsp ground nutmeg |
| ❖ 100g dried apricots | ❖ ¼ tsp ground ginger |
| ❖ 250g fresh dates, pitted | ❖ ¼ cup orange juice |
| | ❖ 1 tbsp coconut oil |

FROSTING

- ❖ 100g raw organic cacao butter, chopped (available from health food stores)
- ❖ 100ml coconut cream
- ❖ 40g maple syrup, good quality

Instructions:

1. Line 8 small 5cm (2-inch) diameter moulds, 50ml capacity small cups or any other oven proof suitable containers with plastic wrap.
2. Combine all the ingredients, except for the orange juice and the coconut oil, in a food processor and blend until the mixture forms into a crumb-like consistency. Remove from the food processor, place in a large mixing bowl and add the orange juice and coconut oil. Knead the mixture until it comes together into a large ball.
3. Divide the pudding mix into 8 portions and pack into the moulds firmly. Refrigerate for 15 minutes to firm. Remove from the moulds, peel off the plastic wrap and place on a tray.
4. Meanwhile, to make the frosting, place the cacao butter in a bowl over a saucepan of boiling water and stir until completely melted. Remove from the heat and then mix in the coconut cream and maple syrup until well combined. Cool at room temperature to thicken the frosting, stirring occasionally.
5. Spoon the frosting over the puddings and refrigerate for 10 to 15 minutes or until the frosting is firm.
6. Decorate the puddings with some fresh raspberries and serve.

STEAMED CHRISTMAS PUDDING

<https://www.quirkycooking.com.au/2014/12/grain-free-steamed-christmas-puddings-gaps-paleo-friendly/>

Ingredients:

- ❖ 150g sultanas
- ❖ 80g dried sour cherries or dried unsweetened cranberries, plus extra for garnish
- ❖ 100g currants
- ❖ 30g raw almonds, roughly chopped
- ❖ 200g kombucha or freshly squeezed orange juice
- ❖ zest of 1 orange
- ❖ 40g almond meal / flour
- ❖ 20g coconut flour
- ❖ 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- ❖ 1/2 tsp mixed spice
- ❖ 1/4 tsp cinnamon



-
- ❖ 55g coconut oil
 - ❖ 40g apple, peeled & cored
 - ❖ 2 eggs
 - ❖ 1/4 tsp fine salt
 - ❖ 1/4 tsp bicarb soda

Instructions:

1. Simmer dried fruit and almonds with kombucha or orange juice for 6 mins and set aside to cool.
2. Place orange zest, almond meal, coconut flour, spices, salt, soda, apple, eggs and coconut oil into a blender and mix. Scrape down sides of bowl.
3. Add soaked fruit and nuts into bowl and mix.
4. Scoop mixture into cupcake cups or small ramekins and place into a steamer, with lid on . (Cups/ramekins should be about 3/4 full.)
5. Steam for 25 mins.
6. Allow puddings to cool, covered, and store in fridge until needed.
7. Drizzle with Coconut Vanilla Custard, with a dried cranberry or sour cherry on top for decoration.

PUMPKIN PIE

<https://www.paleorunningmomma.com/classic-paleo-pumpkin-pie-crust-recipe/>

Ingredients:

For the Paleo pie crust:

- ❖ 1 cup blanched almond flour
- ❖ 2 Tbsp coconut flour sifted
- ❖ 2/3 cup tapioca flour
- ❖ 1/2 cup palm oil shortening cold, or grass fed butter, or a combination of both
- ❖ 1 Tbsp Maple Sugar or coconut sugar*
- ❖ 1/2 tsp fine grain sea salt
- ❖ 1 egg

For the Filling:

- ❖ 15 oz can pumpkin puree
- ❖ 2/3 cup full fat coconut milk blended
- ❖ 6 Tbsp pure maple syrup or more if you'd like it sweeter
- ❖ 2 tsp pure vanilla extract
- ❖ 1 Tbsp pumpkin pie spice
- ❖ 1 tsp cinnamon

- ❖ Pinch salt
- ❖ 2 large eggs room temp
- ❖ 1 egg yolk room temp

Pumpkin Pie Spice Mix:

- ❖ 1/4 cup ground cinnamon
- ❖ 4 teaspoons ground nutmeg
- ❖ 4 teaspoons ground ginger
- ❖ 1 tablespoon ground allspice

Instructions:

Make the Crust:

1. Preheat your oven to 375°F. In the bowl of a food processor, pulse all crust ingredients EXCEPT egg to create thick crumbs, then pulse/process in the egg until a dough forms.
2. Gather the dough into a ball, wrap in plastic, and chill in the refrigerator at least 20 minutes prior to rolling or pressing into your pie dish.
3. Place crust into 9 inch pie dish.

To get the dough into your pie dish, you can either:

Roll out the dough into a circle between two sheets of parchment. Place your pie dish upside-down over the dough, then using the bottom parchment paper, flip the dough into the dish. Finish by pressing it into the bottom and sides of the pie dish to fit - this dough will break easily since it lacks gluten, however it also repairs incredibly easily and can withstand a lot of manipulation without affecting the final product!

OR

If you don't wish to roll out the dough (or find it tricky) you can simply press evenly into 9 inch pie dish using your hands. Be patient and refrigerate dough as needed to make it easier to work with**

4. Once pressed into the pie dish, gently pierce the dough with a fork all over so it doesn't puff up while baking.
5. Bake pie crust for 12-15 mins until bottom is set, remove from oven and allow to cool for 5 minutes before pouring in filling.

Make the Filling:

1. Whisk all ingredients together except eggs, then whisk in eggs and egg yolk 1 at a time, don't over mix.



2. Pour filling into the baked crust, spreading it all around to seal edges. Cover top with aluminum foil and bake at 375°F for 40-45 minutes or until centre is nearly set (still a bit jiggly) and crust is deep golden brown.
3. Allow to cool completely at room temperature to avoid excessive cracking of the filling. Once cooled, serve, or, cover and store in the refrigerator for up to 2 days prior to serving. Serve topped with coconut whipped cream if desired.
4. Enjoy!

Recipe Notes:

*Coconut sugar will cause the crust to darken more than maple sugar

**Unlike a traditional gluten-containing crust, you can't "overwork" the dough, so take your time as needed pressing it into the pie dish

Happy Holidays!



About the Author

Sue Taylor is co-founder and Clinic Director at Ottawa HolisticWellness. She works as a Natural Allergist and Energy Healer. Her passion is to work with clients to find the root cause of their health concerns, then offering ways in which to resolve these causes. She will support you through any necessary changes and help you to regain your life!